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WHOLE NO. 244.

SPEECH OF MR. HALL, OF VERMONT, ON THE FORTIFICATION BILL.

House of Representatives, May 24, 1836.

The House being in Committee of the Whole, Mr. Mann of New York, in the Chair.

Mr. HALL, of Vermont, rose and said, he could not reconcile it with his sense of duty to his constituents to remain longer silent in relation to the events which were daily passing before him. He would have preferred to submit the very general view which he intended to take of some of the most important measures before Congress, when a bill on the table from the Senate (the land bill) should come up for discussion; but he had very lately been warned by some rather ominous votes of the House; that it might be the pleasure of gentlemen to prevent any direct action of the House on that bill, and he had therefore determined to avail himself of the present occasion. He knew it was the desire of gentlemen to take the question that night, and he should condense his remarks in such a manner as to occupy as little of the time of the committee as was practicable.

We have, as I think, (said Mr. H.) reached a new and extraordinary era in the history of this nation. When we came together in December, we were in the midst of an excitement arising out of an apprehended war with France. During the existence of that excitement, when it was supposed by the country that real and imminent danger existed of an almost immediate war with a most powerful foreign nation, we were furnished by the Executive with an estimate of appropriations which would be required for that year. Do you remember, sir, the amount of those requisitions? I will remind you of them. They were as follows:

Ordinary appropriations specifically called for,	\$17,515,933
Computation of extraordinary appropriations to meet all anticipated contingencies,	5,617,707
Making, in the whole,	23,133,640

This, sir, you will observe, was the estimate submitted to us during the existence of our difficulties with France—a war estimate—or, at least such an estimate as the Executive branch of the government thought it proper to recommend under the possible, if not probable, contingency of a war with a powerful foreign nation. And a comparison of the amount with former estimates will show that it greatly exceeded those of previous years; and that, upon the principle on which the government has heretofore acted, it could only be justified by the uncertain and somewhat alarming state of our foreign affairs. Now, sir, all our difficulties are amicably adjusted; the nation is at peace; no foreign war is apprehended, and suddenly, as if by magic, a new warlike watchword is rung in our ears. It is sounded from the Capitol, echoed in the newspapers, sought to be published in the streets and proclaimed from the house-tops. "National defence! National defence!" is the cry, and we, sir, of the minority, who have heretofore been branded as wasteful and extravagant legislators for our votes in favor of reasonable appropriations for fortifications, are now approached by the same gentlemen who lately denounced us, and very gravely asked if we are not in favor of appropriations for the "national defence?" Even the chairman of the committee of Ways and Means, (Mr. Cambreleng,) who has never been over liberal in his support of the appropriations for fortifications, and whose name in the journal of the last session stands recorded in opposition to mine against an appropriation of sixty seven thousand dollars, for one of the precise objects for which the present bill, reported by him, contains an appropriation of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars; he, sir, now seems ready to question even the patriotism of any one who hesitates to swallow, without examination, the most quixotic projects for squandering the public money, under the name of expenditures for the national defence. Sir, this is no cry of patriotism—it is the cry of border interest, and of party; and, for one, I shall not respond to it. The conversion of gentlemen is altogether too sudden, the object too palpable, to give to their new efforts any other character than that of the ridiculous; and by that character they must and will be known to the country. As to myself, sir, I shall keep straight ahead on my old track. I have always voted in favor of liberal appropriations for the national defence, and I shall continue to vote for them. I shall cheerfully vote for the one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for fortifying Boston harbor, uninfluenced by the last year's opposition of the honorable chairman, and for any other appropriations that have a reasonable claim to our approbation. But, sir, I will not vote for appropriations merely to get rid of the public money. I shall first inquire, as I have heretofore done, whether the object for which the money is asked be a proper one; and if it be, then whether the sum demanded can be profitably expended during the year? If I come to an affirmative conclusion on both these points I shall vote for the appropriation. Otherwise, I shall vote against it, and risk the denunciations of all new converts to the "national defence" party.

Sir, the secret of this new course of action, which is, indeed, no secret at all, is the discovery of a large surplus in the Treasury, which the people are desirous of having distributed among the States, and applied to some useful purpose. To prevent this distribution, we have for the last two or three months, witnessed a state of things altogether new in the history of our legislation. Heretofore the requisitions

of the Departments were examined with some degree of scrutiny by the committee of Ways and Means, to ascertain if they were necessary, or if some deductions from their amount might not reasonably be made. Formerly, when an unexpected requisition came in, you could discover by the sober demeanor of the committee of Ways and Means, that they were fearful of the effect of the new call on the house, and that they regretted the necessity which compelled them to advocate it. Now, the scene is entirely changed. No sooner does the chairman of that committee receive a call for a new appropriation, even for a few thousand dollars, than his countenance is lighted up with unusual joy; and on the prospect of a new Indian war, and the consequent call for an appropriation of a million, his exultation is extreme. He rises in his place, with great apparent self-gratulation, announces the fact to the House, and in a note of triumph, informs us that we must stop talking about the surplus, for we should now have an opportunity of spending it.

But, sir, gentlemen have not been content with the requisitions of the Executive. The Departments, contrary to all former precedents, have been solicited and importuned, and teased, by resolutions and letters of committees, and personal applications, for additional estimates. A resolution of the Senate of the 18th of February asking for additional estimates produced a brief letter from the Secretary of the Navy, transmitting, not his own views, but the imaginings of the Navy Commissioners; and a detailed report of the Secretary of War, overthrowing and "toppling down headlong" most of the tall project of gentlemen for dissipating the revenue on fortifications—a report which does the highest credit to that distinguished officer, and which had its production been the only act of his life, would have placed his name by the side of those of the most eminent statesmen of the country. The answer to this resolution was not a very digestible affair. The Secretary of the Navy said nothing. The Secretary of War interposed an argument that could not be controverted; and, what was no less insuperable, the President himself expressed an opinion in accordance with the Secretary. But gentlemen were not to be put aside by one refusal. The Senate place themselves in an imploring attitude, and address the Secretary in the language of supplication. "Do, sir, be so good as to inform us the most you can possibly expend during the year, in your Department?" "What is the maximum amount?"—that is the language—that can be expended? This question was rather too extraordinary for so old fashioned a man as the Secretary, and he seems to have been puzzled to know what to do with it. He knew the extravagant answer which the craving appetites of those who made the inquiry demanded, and that he could not give it without abandoning the estimate he had deliberately made at the commencement of the session, and contradicting all the principles which he had so ably maintained in his report. But not desiring to be unkind to so respectable and gentlemanly a body as the Senate of the U. States, he hands over the resolution to the Chief Engineer: "Here, sir, you answer it." From the reputation which the Chief Engineer has whether justly or not I will not pretend to say—of being the most liberal and latitudinarian of any officer in the Government in regard to appropriations, one might naturally suppose he would have found no difficulty in giving the required answer. But no such thing. Even he, sir, believes there is a limit within which expenditures should be circumscribed, and beyond which they become wasteful and extravagant. He, too, declines to answer, and following the example of the Secretary, hands over the humble entreaty of the Senate to his subordinate; and we at length have a Second Lieutenant of Engineers, in some half a dozen lines, saying that, in his opinion, some six millions may be beneficially expended on fortifications, annually. And it is upon this naked opinion of a Second Lieutenant of Engineers, without any designation of objects, or any reasons assigned for the extraordinary conclusion to which he has arrived, that we are to be called upon to appropriate millions of the public money.

Sir, the Secretary of War repudiates the idea of lavishing our resources on extensive fortifications on the seaboard—fortifications which it would require a large standing army to man—and which no enemy would be silly enough to go out of his way to attack, when he could accomplish any object of invasion much more conveniently by passing them beyond gunshot distance. He overthrows most conclusively the extended system of defence on which our former systems have been made, proposes to confine our fortification to the protection of the important seaports from naval approaches, and to limit the extent of those works to their capability, with the aid of steam batteries, of accomplishing that object, and of resisting sudden attacks; relying on the patriotism of the people, aided by the facilities afforded by the internal improvements of the country for the rapid concentration of force on any point of attack, as the great and leading means of national defence. He recommends a re-examination of sites and a reconsideration of plans, before commencing new works.—Sir, this is the language of reason and of common sense; and whoever adopts the principles of the Secretary will find it somewhat difficult to discover proper objects for the expenditure of much more than a tithe of the sum recommended—no, not recommended—extorted from one of the clerks in the office of the Chief Engineer. Besides, sir, we all know that when the objects of appropriation are desirable, there

is a limit beyond which money cannot be profitably expended in any given period of time. A document on our table shows that there remained in the Treasury on the first day of January last, of money before appropriated and not then expended, \$8,726,000. Of this sum more than two millions were of appropriations for repairs of ships, and the increase and improvement of the Navy; \$133,000 for Navy yards, and although no fortification bill passed at the last session, there still remained in the Treasury at the beginning of the present year over fifty six thousand dollars, of money previously appropriated to fortifications—and all this during the existing difficulties with France. Sir, either the Executive must have been wilfully negligent of its duties, or the unexpended money in the Treasury could not be profitably expended. Gentlemen certainly will not take the first horn of the dilemma. Neither will I. We all know that the demand which the Government makes for the peculiar kind of materials and labor which it requires, may become greater than the natural means of supply; and that when such point is reached, any attempt to force the prosecution of works must result either in a material reduction in their quality and value, or such a wasteful expenditure of money as no Government would engage in but during a period of the most extreme necessity and danger. Sir, most of the money under these extravagant appropriations cannot, and will not be expended. It will still remain in the Treasury, and all attempts to drain it by this mode of operation, will, so far as the money is not extravagantly wasted, be altogether nugatory. The Secretaries, both of War and the Navy, well understand this matter, and wisely decline making themselves responsible for these Quixotic appropriations. If gentlemen desire to assume a responsibility which the Executive declines, they are certainly at liberty to do so. I shall take care to wash my hands of the responsibility by voting against the appropriations.

But, sir, the "national defence" project having encountered so many obstacles from the Departments, and it being ascertained that it will entirely fail of dissipating the public revenue, gentlemen have very industriously set themselves at work in inventing other schemes for accomplishing the same laudable object. I shall not stop to enumerate the various projects which this strife for the honor of being the inventor of the most expedient and effectual mode of draining the Treasury has produced. Any gentleman, who has a curiosity to examine a list of them, will find one approximating as nearly to perfection as the nature of the subject will admit, in the printed remarks of the gentleman from New York on my left, (Mr. Gillet), who catechised so non committally his colleague, (Mr. Grauger), in regard to these various schemes, and who, I thought before the prompt responses of his colleague were completed, most heartily wished them back in the brains of the very respectable gentleman who had concocted them. I feel under great obligations to my friend from New York (Mr. Gillet) for the labor he has so praiseworthy expended, in hunting up from among the dusty files of the two Houses these various schemes, and of presenting them in so condensed and portable a form. I have had thoughts of moving the House for the printing of an extra number of the gentleman's catalogue, in order that my constituents might have a perfect knowledge of the very great variety of modes by which the public money may be ingeniously squandered; but as I doubt whether such a motion would be in order without a suspension of the rules, I trust the gentleman will pardon me for waiving it, at least for present. It is a little remarkable, sir, that two of the most prominent of these objects—in pursuance, perhaps, of the great anxiety of gentlemen to put down all monopolies—are for the benefit of corporations. I refer to the project of the grave Senator from Tennessee, (Mr. Grundy) for entering into partnership with railroad companies; and to the no less commendable one of the Senator from New York, (Mr. Wright) for investing the surplus in corporation stocks. Who are to be the agents of making these investments we have not yet been informed. I hope I shall not be considered out of order in suggesting that there are sundry very worthy gentlemen in the New York Senate, who have had great experience in these stock matters, and whose claims for services rendered, and trials and tribulations endured in the bloody wars against monopolies, ought not to be overlooked.

Mr. Chairman, there is a very great inherent difficulty in this matter of spending the entire surplus. When there are really no proper objects of expenditure, it requires immense intellectual labor to discover them. I wonder, sir, that some gentleman has not introduced an appropriation, say of a million or two, to be awarded to the person who should invent the most plausible mode of draining the treasury. I do not think it would produce many new schemes, for I believe the ingenuity of gentlemen has already been taxed to the utmost; but it would have the merit of being itself a project, and of abstracting from the Treasury precisely the amount which was appropriated as a premium. If any gentleman has a scheme in his drawer ready to offer, and thinks this a better one; or, if any gentleman who has produced a scheme, and ridden it through its butterfly life, is desirous of mounting another hobby, he is welcome to this—"Free gratis for nothing." I leave the sum blank, to be filled up by whoever receives it. I do not engage that it is absolutely a proper mode of spending the public money; nor do I desire any gentleman to take the scheme absolutely at his own risk. I warrant it to be fully equal, in every respect, to most of the projects that have

gone before it, and I further warrant that the people, to whom all these matters must be finally submitted, will so consider it.

Mr. Chairman, I propose to inquire into the actual state of the Treasury, with the view of ascertaining whether its condition and prospects will allow of a distribution of the proceeds of the public lands among the States, as proposed by the bill on your table from the Senate. But, before doing so, I beg leave to call the attention of the committee to the two last annual reports of the Secretary of the Treasury, for the purpose of showing how entirely mistaken he has been in his estimates of the future revenue of the country.

In his report of December 2, 1834, he estimated the balance that would be in the Treasury on the first of January, 1835, at \$5,586,232 34.

He estimated the receipts during the year 1835, at 20,000,000 00. Making of available funds for that year, \$25,586,232 34. By the report of December, 1835, it appears that the actual balance in the Treasury on the first of January, 1835, instead of being about 5 1-2 millions, as he had before estimated, was \$8,892,858 42; and by the same report we are informed that the receipts of 1835, instead of being but 20 millions, would be \$28,430,381 07, exceeding by nearly 8 1-2 millions his previous estimate. Observe, sir, this was the estimate made at the commencement of the present session.

But, on the 13th of January, the Secretary, in answer to a call from the Senate, informs us that his estimate of receipts, made in December, was quite too low; and that the actual receipts for 1835 were \$34,400,733 42, being an addition of six millions, which the short period of six weeks had enabled him to discover. The account then, between the Treasury and the Secretary's estimates for 1835, stands thus:

January 1, 1835,	\$8,892,858 42
Actual receipts for 1835,	34,400,733 42
Making the sum of	\$43,293,592 11
Deduct balance in the Treasury and receipts as estimated,	25,586,232 34

Leaving an excess of \$17,707,359 77 of available funds for the year 1835 over and above the sum which had been estimated by the Secretary at the commencement of the year.

Sir, in this matter of estimates, the Secretary does not seem to profit by experience, for he has been quite as wide of the mark this year as last; and he runs into the same error, that of estimating the revenue greatly too low. In his annual report, made at the commencement of the present session, he estimates the receipts for 1836 from all sources at \$19,725,700. On the 18th of April, 1836, in answer to a call from the Senate, the Secretary informs us that the actual receipts for the first quarter of 1836 amounted to the sum of \$10,725,700, about one million more than one half of his estimated revenue for the whole year. Here again the Secretary, five days afterwards, finds his estimate for the first quarter to be minus about half a million. Hear his explanation: I quote from his report of April 23, 1836: "It is deemed proper to add, that some additional returns of receipts into the Treasury during some of the last days of March, which, from great distance, irregularity in the mails, or some other cause, had not arrived, and could not be ascertained by either the Treasurer or this Department at the time of my former Report, have since been received, and increase the amount as then ascertained by him in his running account to be the balance in the Treasury about \$451,545." So the actual receipts into the Treasury during the quarter ending March 31, 1836, were \$11,177,245.

Sir, a man of more suspicious temperaments than myself might charge this uniform system of blundering, which the Secretary seems to have fallen into, to some motive of concealment, extraneous from the public good. I make no such charge. I will not question either the integrity or general ability of the Secretary. I believe him to be in many respects an excellent officer. I impugn not his motives; but I will say this of him, that for a Yankee he shows very little candor in guessing. Why, sir, the dullest of the Kentuckians on Green river, who were the other day informed by my friend (Mr. Hawes,) their representative, mistook an astronomical observation for the miraculous re-appearance of Jacob's ladder, would be willing to reckon on a wager against his guessing; and in Western phrase, would be "mighty likely to beat him all hollow."

Mr. Chairman, I come now to inquire into the actual condition of the Treasury, with a view to ascertain what sum will be for disposed during the present year. In doing this, I shall rely on the statements made by the Secretary of the Treasury himself for the past, and on estimates for the future, the reasonableness of which cannot be called in question.

The balance in the Treasury January 1st, 1835, was,	\$8,892,858 42
Revenue of 1835,	34,400,733 42
Making,	43,293,592 11
Deduct expenditures of 1835, 18,176,141 07	

Actual balance in the Treasury January 1st, 1836,	\$25,117,451 04
Actual receipts first quarter 1836,	11,177,245 00
	36,294,696 04

Three last quarters 1836, estimated 8 1-2 millions each, 25,000,000 00

Making in the Treasury at the end of the year, \$61,294,696 04

I believe my estimate of the three last quarters is too low. I know that several gentlemen, friends of the Administration, in whom as financiers I have great confidence, estimate the sum at thirty millions instead of twenty five. I prefer to err, if at all, on the safe side, and therefore take the lowest sum. In addition to this sum, the Government has, in the United States Bank, stock to the amount of seven millions, which the Bank is now ready to pay, with an addition of 14 per cent., and which will doubtless come into the Treasury during the year, with a still greater advance.—I call this sum eight millions. We are informed by the Secretary, in his report of December, 1834, that there will always be, at the end of every year, a sum of several millions in the Treasury of unexpended balances of former appropriations, which may be safely relied upon to meet appropriations for the ensuing year. This sum, on the first of January last, was about eight millions. The amount of this sum must increase in a much greater ratio than the increase of appropriations, and as the appropriations of the present year are to be unusually large, the unexpended balance at the end of the year will be much larger than any former period. It is impossible to form a decisive opinion as to the amount until after the appropriations are made. It cannot be less than twelve millions. (Mr. LAWRENCE here said "not less than fifteen millions.") Mr. H. continued: a member of the Committee on Ways and Means says not less than fifteen millions. Sir, if your extraordinary appropriations for fortifications are made, and added to those of like character, which have already passed for the Navy, the sum will be much larger than fifteen millions. I have before said that there is a limit beyond which money cannot be expended. Sir, you may go on and appropriate some half a dozen millions more for Indian wars, the causes of which yet remain unknown, and about which, the manner of conducting them, no one seems willing to take the trouble to inquire—go on, sir, with your appropriations for fortifications and Indian treaties, and for every other conceivable object for which the most latitudinarian gentleman can make up his mind to vote—go on, until you have appropriated every dollar in the Treasury; and the great mass of the money will still remain there, undrawn and unexpended.—Why, sir, if more than two millions of former appropriations for the increase of the Navy could not be used during the last year, when a French war was apprehended, how are you to expend tripple the sum this year, when this year's appropriation is made at a much later period in the season than the last? Sir, these appropriations cannot be expended; it is idle to talk about it. Whatever may be the amount of your appropriations, whatever may be the footing of your appropriation bills at the end of the session, it may be calculated with perfect safety that a sum greater than thirty millions cannot and will not be drawn out of the Treasury; and any amount above that sum may be considered as remaining there, a fund for distribution, with perfect security to the Treasury. But to go on with the calculation I had commenced. Suppose the unexpected balance at the end of the year to be only twelve millions, making an increase over that of the present year of four millions; this four millions, with the United States Bank stock, amounts to sixteen millions, which added to the \$61,294,696 04 before ascertained, gives in round numbers, the sum of seventy three millions, which would be in the Treasury at the end of the year, if no sums were drawn out. The proceeds of the public lands for the three past years, which the land bill proposes to distribute, together with those of the present year, at a liberal estimate, may be put down at 36 millions. Call the sum to be distributed 36 millions, and we have still left to be appropriated to the ordinary purposes of Government the enormous sum of 37 millions—a sum greater, by about 19 millions than the expenditures of the last year, and greater, by 14 millions, than the whole estimates of the Secretary, ordinary and extraordinary, for the expenditures of this. Sir, I shall not go into any particular estimate of the condition of the Treasury for the ensuing year; for although the land bill proposes to distribute the proceeds of the public lands for 1837, I deem the inquiry wholly unnecessary. I have no manner of doubt that the revenue from the customs alone, for several years to come, will be abundantly sufficient for all the wants of the Government, but the distribution for 1837, if now ordered, will be under the perfect control of Congress at its next session, and may be recalled if the necessities of the country shall be found to require it. I will not, therefore, enter on the discussion of a question of so complicated a character, when its final decision, if now made, would not be material to the matter I have had in hand, which was to show, what I think I have clearly shown, that the land bill may be passed with perfect safety to the Treasury.

Mr. Chairman, having shown that the state of the public funds will admit the passage of the land bill, I would now be glad if I could, to satisfy the House that the interest and welfare of the country require its passage. But in this undertaking, I am met in the outset with obstacles against which the demonstrative reasoning of arithmetic calculations cannot be impetuous; with obstacles more powerful than those coming in the shape of strong argument or stirring eloquence; obstacles which nothing but individual self-examination and independent patriotism can remove—the obstacles of prejudice and party feeling. Sir, the great misfortune of this measure of distribution is, not that it is a bad measure, but that, with the majority, it has got a bad name. I sincerely wish, for the

good of the country, that it bore the name of some popular politician, rather than that of a persecuted statesman. I wish it was a Jackson or a Van Buren bill, because I believe it would then pass the House by acclamation. Sir, this ought not to be considered a party measure. It cannot operate for the particular benefit of any party, or of any particular section. It will operate equally on the People and on the whole country; and whatever gentlemen may have heretofore thought in regard to it, however they may have formerly voted on it, it is now presented under circumstances so entirely new, that they may, without making themselves liable to the charge of the slightest inconsistency, give it their warm support. Heretofore, the event of there being a surplus to be divided was matter of calculation and estimate. Now the existence of the surplus is ascertained—has become an established fact, on which we are called upon in some way to act.—Will gentlemen suffer this enormous surplus to be squandered by the central Government on objects which, when accomplished, will confer no practical benefit on the country, rather than impose on themselves the labor of independent thinking on a question of such deep importance to their constituents? Will they suffer a personal bias, perhaps hastily imbibed, under the influence of high party excitement, to shut out from their minds the light which fact and reason may shed on this question? Certainly they will not. Gentlemen will examine this measure with fairness and candor, and, having done so, I cannot doubt the conclusion to which they will arrive. They must and will unite in favor of the distribution.

Mr. Chairman, I have said that I regretted this measure of distribution was connected with the name of a distinguished statesman. Not, sir, that I would be willing to pluck a single laurel from the brow of that individual. I have had the honor, from my youth up, through good and through evil report, to be his political friend and admirer. I now claim it as an honor; and when the mists of party rancor shall have passed away; when the name and fame of that individual shall become matter of history, and he claimed as the common property of the nation; when men shall wonder at the delusions which had seized on his contemporaries, my children will claim it as an honor to be able to say of me, My parent coolly breathed the torrent of popular clamor, and always did him justice.

But, sir, great as may be my regard for any individual, I hope my regard for my country is still greater; and believing as I do, that this measure is of the highest importance to the welfare of our country, and to the peaceful continuance of our republican system, I would willingly give the merit of its success, if it could be justly done, to the most violent political opponent. In the hope, perhaps, sir, a vain one—of conciliating the good will of some who, from the name of this measure, may have hastily taken up an unfavorable opinion of it, and for the sake of doing justice to other statesmen of our country, and particularly to my immediate predecessor on the floor of this House, I take occasion to say, that although this measure of distribution has become the adopted child of the distinguished Senator to whom I have alluded; though it wears his dress, and has taken his name, yet he can lay no just claim to the parentage of its leading principles. Without going back to an earlier period, and without noticing various suggestions and propositions of different individuals, which had been made both in and out of Congress, it will be found that as early as January, 1826, in anticipation that as soon as the public debt should be paid off, the revenue of the country would exceed the wants of the Government, an honorable Senator from New Jersey, now Secretary of the Navy, brought forward a proposition for distributing annually among the States a portion of the public revenue, for purposes of education and internal improvement. The resolution was entertained by the Senate, and the subject referred to a committee, of which the Senator introducing it was the chairman; and on the 11th May following, the committee made a detailed and able report in favor of the measure, accompanied by a bill for distributing among the States, according to their representative population, five millions annually for five years, ending with the year 1831. The recollection of gentlemen will enable them to confirm the statement which I now make, that this measure of distribution was for several years, in many parts of the country, a favorite one with the friends of the present chief Magistrate. It had received so much attention, and was deemed so important, that General Jackson made the subject a part of his first message to Congress. In that message, delivered December 8, 1829, he enumerates with much clearness and force some of the evils which were in future to be apprehended from a surplus revenue, evils under which the country is now actually laboring. He then proceeds, as I will read to you: "To avoid these evils," says the Message, "it appears to me that the most safe, just, and federal disposition which could be made of the surplus revenue, would be its apportionment among the several States, according to their ratio of representation; and should this measure not be found warranted by the Constitution, that it would be expedient to propose to the States an amendment authorizing it. Sir, the President then deemed this measure of distribution so important, that if constitutional objections should be found to present obstacles in the way of its accomplishment he would have them removed, even by the tardy and difficult process of an amendment of the Constitution. I do not find, sir, that the President's views met with